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ABSTRACT

Difficulties in recruiting and retaining rural special educators relate directly to deficiencies in teacher preparation programs, which are not providing their budding professionals with appropriate instruction to insure success and survival as rural special educators. In December 1982, a National Consortium of Universities Preparing Rural Special Educators was formed to participate in the development of curriculum designed specifically for rural preservice programs. Also, 37 universities and colleges across the country agreed to field test 10 preservice curriculum modules developed by the National Rural Project and to modify them to suit their needs, with the modifications recorded via cassette tape logs. The modules are based on competencies designed for infusion into ongoing special education programs, and include personal development skills and effective survival strategies, alternative instructional arrangements and delivery systems for low-incidence handicapped students, involving citizens and agencies of rural communities in cooperative programming for handicapped students, working with parents of handicapped students, working with peer professionals in rural environments, creative resource identification, and a rural preservice simulation. Personnel specifically trained to work with rural handicapped populations will have greater personal as well as professional success. Ninety-two curriculum elements to be included in preservice modules are listed. (MH)

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Abstract

The bandwagon has finally reached rural America. This paper discusses important considerations for those who would board this bandwagon carrying baggage which includes preconceived ideas about using traditional special education programs to prepare special educators for rural areas. Competencies and curriculum elements which should be included in preservice programs are discussed.

A BAND WAGON WITHOUT MUSIC: PREPARING RURAL SPECIAL EDUCATORS

Identifying the Bandwagon

Universities and colleges are preparing three kinds of people to teach in rural special education programs. The first type of special educator grew up in rural communities. This person knows the cultures and communication systems, and is comfortable in both the social and professional rural mileau. This person is eager to become a rural special educator for the duration of his or her career and is not likely to move.

The second type of person that accepts a teaching position in rural areas is place-bound. This person wants or needs to live in a specific area and is forced into teaching special education by circumstances. Either there are no positions available other than special education, or a special education position is all that is offered to this person. Frequently, this person is not even certified in special education and must receive either emergency or temporary certification from the state department of education. There are vastly disproportionate numbers of such "temporary" certified "special educators" in rural areas as compared to the number of such personnel in urban areas. Even in the mid-1980's there are many rural "special educators" teaching children because they opted for that instead of becoming a bus driver, cafeteria worker, or school custodian.

The third type of special educator accepting positions in rural areas knows nothing about ruralness, comes from an urban teacher education program, and is merely biding time until he or she can find a

job--any type of job--in an urban school system. These persons are unaware of the distinctions between rural and urban subcultures and of effective strategies for meeting the needs of rural handicapped students. Because these new teachers haven't been prepared for a rural life (Helge, 1981; Young, 1981; Muse, 1980) rural "culture shock" occurs. This fact causes the loss of many newly recruited special educators. The third group of students is primarily the group that constitutes the huge turnover reported among rural special educators where attrition rates of 30 - 50% are the norm. (Helge, 1983)

Helge (1981), in a study involving special education administrators at state and local levels in twenty-two states identified "difficulty recruiting qualified staff as the most prevalent problem in implementing P.L. 94-142." The same result was found again by Helge in 1983 in a telephone survey of over 200 local education agency and cooperative administrators.

Difficulties in staff recruitment and retention directly relate to deficiencies in personnel preparation programs. We are simply not preparing a sufficient quantity of qualified personnel for rural special education programs. More importantly, teacher preparation programs are not providing their budding professionals with appropriate instruction that would insure their success and survival as rural special educators. A U.S. Special Education Programs (SEP) Briefing Paper (1980) stated that although SEP has invested time and money to address shortages of other special education personnel, rural personnel shortages are most acute because, "We have not prepared special education personnel who are able to adjust to the demands of remote, isolated, or culturally distinct rural areas." This statement was later verified by Smith & Burke

(1983) who reported that interviews with state education agency directors of special education determined that universities were not preparing special education personnel in socialization of work in rural communities.

All A'Board

Numerous universities and colleges with large special education teacher preparation programs, upon hearing of the quantites of teachers needed in rural areas, leaped blindly and confidently onto the rural special educator preparation bandwagon. Most of their results were pathetic. They did not develop anything particularly new, and graduates of these programs would feel equally competent (or more so) to function in urban areas. Their graduates agreed to spend brief periods of time teaching in rural programs while awaiting more affluent and prestigious positions in urban and metropolitan areas, and these new educators were basically untrained to deal with rural subcultures. Several faculty at "major" institutions began to analyze the rural experience and to translate it into curriculum and policy. Some of these educators decided to enlighten the world via the written word and went to their Ivory Towers to write "Rural Special Education" in books and grant applications.

State education agencies are attempting to alleviate personnel shortages and attrition through such strategies as providing educational incentives to practicing teachers. One example of this is in Kentucky where the state department of education pays the educational expenses for practicing teachers in courses required for certification in areas of need identified by the state. Other states and communities offer salary supplements to special educators to entice them to accept rural special education positions.

One strategy employed by most school systems in nearly all states is the issuance of emergency or temporary certificates. Relatively high percentages of the rural special education directors and teachers interviewed by the NRP reported a lack of training for their positions (e.g., 15% of the rural special education directors and teachers had taken few or no courses in special education). Sixty-six (66%) percent of those surveyed reported that emergency certification is typically used in their districts. They stated that temporarily certified personnel were not qualified for the positions they held. (Helge, 1983)

Many small and regional institutions have gotten on the bandwagon (and rightfully so) since most of their graduates are placed in rural settings. In December, 1982, at the project director's meeting called by SEP and held in Washington, D.C., a National Consortium of Universities Preparing Rural Special Educators was formed. The Consortium was initially composed of representatives from some 47 universities. They agreed to participate, or be involved in some level, in the development of curriculum designed specifically for rural preservice programs. Consortium members were invited to join at one of three levels ranging from being on a mailing list to receive newsletters and other news items, to participating in teleconferences and resource sharing or actually assisting in the development and field testing of curricula. Most institutions opted to participate in the curriculum design and implementation aspect of the Consortium. Subsequently, over twenty additional institutions indicated a desire to participate and are now members of the Consortium.

A sub-group within the Teacher Education Division of CEC, the Small College Caucus, was also formed to provide a forum for resource and

technical skills sharing among members. While not all small colleges prepare special educators for rural areas, most special educators going to rural areas are trained in small colleges.

Another group of players on the bandwagon come from 37 universities and colleges across the country which agreed to field-test preservice curriculum modules developed by the National Rural Project as a result of 3½ years of research and program design. These participating institutions are modifying the curriculum modules to suit their needs and recording the modifications via cassette tape logs. These logs will be reviewed, along with any written materials added to the modules. The final product of these modules will be available from the National Rural Project at Murray State University, for use by institutions across the country. Since a wide diversity of universities and colleges is using the materials, it is expected that modules will be developed to fit most settings regardless of the constituency base of the teacher education program. (The competencies upon which these instructional modules were developed are discussed later in this paper.)

The field of special education should be delighted with the attention that its rural cousins are receiving. Eventually when the dust from the band wagon begins to settle and the discordant music fades into the sunset, the survivors of this pendulum swing who are left behind will enhance the educational lives of handicapped children in rural areas.

Some Audience Requests of the Band Wagon

The 1983 National Rural Project survey (Helge, 1983) of 200 rural special education directors and teachers in all 50 states concluded that

being trained in a rural or regional college or university site did not guarantee a rural training emphasis. In fact, 100% of those interviewed stated that their "rural training" took place, "on the job." In that same study, 32% of the respondents could not state a strength of their preservice training for preparation for working with rural handicapped children, their parents, and rural communities. In contrast, 62% noted the lack of realistic experiences in a rural community as a significant void in their training program.

The 1983 study indicated that preservice preparation for rural special educators must become more specific, with rural-focused content and experiential training techniques. None of the 200 respondents in the telephone survey stated that they were trained specifically for work with rural handicapped students. In fact, only 10% described their preservice training as adequate to work in rural communities. The table below summarizes their answers to the survey question, "What additional preservice training do you wish you had received but did not?"

Table 1

WHAT ADDITIONAL TRAINING DO YOU WISH YOU HAD RECEIVED BUT DID NOT?

Experiential training (including on-site work, simulations of problem solving, team management, communication, etc.)	59%
Additional knowledge (coordination of services, regional delivery systems, team management, school law, finance, and itinerant service strategies)	57%
Generic techniques to be able to work without the availability of specialists for low incidence handicaps	48%
Knowledge of rural cultures, mores, and techniques for acceptance	36%
Recruitment and retention techniques	31%
Transportation alternatives	24%
Serving minority students in rural areas	3%
Learning disabilities information	1%

The interviewees' responses to the question, "What do you wish you had known about working in a rural community before you began doing so?" are summarized below:

Table 2

What Do You Wish You Had Known About Working in a Rural Community Before You Began Doing So?

Coping with remoteness to services and other resources	68%
Techniques for generic service delivery serving children without the availability of specialists	66%
Coping with remoteness from personal enrichment and stress reduction activities	56%
How to work with rural families and communities	38%
Information regarding rural subcultures	38%
Recruitment and retention strategies	21%
Transportation constraints (personal and professional)	21%
Dealing with transient populations	11%
Respondent was from the type of rural area in which he or she eventually became employed	24%

It is clear that rural special educator preparation programs need to focus more on "ruralness" than they have been doing. Few respondents to any of the National Rural Project research inquiries have indicated a need for more instruction in curriculum, methods, or characteristics of handicapped children. Rather, for successful survival in rural areas, special educators need to know how to personally and professionally adapt and adjust to the rural culture in which they find themselves employed. More people leave their special education position in rural areas because of social and professional growth limitations than do so because of incompetence.

Problems for Members of the Band

Most universities and colleges preparing special educators for rural areas use essentially the same curricula as do their colleagues in institutions of higher education in urban areas. Rural or regional universities and colleges do, in fact, have a number of unique problems not experienced by their big-city counterparts. A few of these are listed below:

Limitations in the quantity and quality of role models and materials and facilities in many remote areas/rural schools in which practica and student teaching must be arranged. The need to expose students to quality, innovative, state-of-the-art learning situations, facilities and equipment is mediated by what is usually present in available practica and internship locations and somewhat by the need to inject reality into the curricula.

Adequate numbers of practica sites and the ability to transport students to them is frequently a problem.

Student housing in off-university practicum locations requires extensive logistics and community/university cooperation.

The problems of supervision are great including the cost of travel and housing and the cost effectiveness of supervising one or two students per community.

Since practicum, observation and student teaching locations are typically spread over a wide geographic area, climatic variables enter into the design of curriculum as well.

Many smaller institutions offer courses dealing with low incidence handicaps in only a cursory manner unless a particular faculty member happens to have such an expertise and interest.

Most faculty members in smaller universities have multiple responsibilities including 12 hour teaching loads, supervision and travel, along with traditional service to the field, and research requirements. Therefore, there is typically little time for development of new curriculum materials.

Many rural and regional institutions use adjunct instructors to help them meet the tremendous needs of rural communities for teacher preparation. Most of these adjunct personnel live within the communities in which they teach and their courses are rarely supervised or quality controlled by the parent institution.

> Many regional institutions offer complete programs off campus in "satellite centers" located some distance from the university or college. These satellite centers rarely have adequate library and other materials available and the "students" in these courses are usually practitioners who cannot ("will not") travel to the university or college in search of additional resources.

There are hundreds of sincere professionals in regional universities and colleges who train rural special educators. These faculty have as strong a commitment to quality as do faculty in larger or more centrally located institutions. However, quality is sometimes more difficult to achieve because of heavy workloads, diverse responsibilities, funding problems and isolated facilities described above. Additionally, there have not been, heretofore, curricula developed specifically for the preparation of rural special educators and these teacher educators have been forced to use (and modify to some degree) the same type curricula used in institutions of higher education in urban and metropolitan settings. Thus most curricula across the country look alike regardless of whether the students they are designed to prepare intend to seek employment in rural or urban settings. Therefore, most graduates of these programs in widely divergent settings look more alike than different in terms of their professional capabilities upon graduation.

There is an obvious need for rural preservice curriculum to be developed that is field tested and validated, and this is being done by the National Rural Project under a grant from the SEP. This curriculum will be transportable and usable in most university and college settings across the country in which rural special educators are prepared.

Some Music for the Bandwagon

Studies conducted by the Murray State University, National Rural Project over the past four years have provided a considerable amount of information regarding the areas of critical need in rural school systems throughout the country. Table 3 below lists these needed curriculum areas.

Table 3

Areas Needing Curricula Developed to Adequately Prepare Rural Special Educators

1. Severely Handicapped and Other Low Incidence Handicaps
2. Rural Independent Living Skills
3. Technology in Rural Schools
4. Populations over 17
5. Rural Early Childhood
6. Rural Special Education Administration
7. Rural Secondary Special Education Programs
8. Related Services in Rural Schools
9. Rural Vocational Education
10. Rural Vocational Rehabilitation
11. Rural Community Mobilization
12. Rural Speech Therapists
13. Rural Generic Special Education
    Rural Special Education Teachers for:
14. Emotionally Disturbed Children
15. Learning Disabled Children
16. Educable Mentally Handicapped Children

As mentioned earlier, during the 1983-84 school year 37 universities and colleges throughout the country are field testing ten curriculum modules developed by the National Rural Project. The titles of these modules are:

1. Personal Development Skills and Strategies for Effective Survival as a Rural Special Educator.
2. The State-of-the-Art of Rural Special Education
3. Alternative Instructional Arrangements and Delivery Systems for Low Incidence Handicapped Students in Rural America.

4. Involving Citizens and Agencies of Rural Communities in Cooperative Programming for Handicapped Students.

5. Working with Parents of Handicapped Students.

6. Solving Rural Parent-Professional Related Dilemmas.

7. Working with Peer Professionals in Rural Environments.

8. Creative Resource Identification for Providing Services to Rural Handicapped Students.

9. Solving Educational Dilemmas Related to School Administration.

10. Warren Springs, Mesa. A Rural Preservice Simulation for Use With NRP-Developed Rural Preservice Modules.

These modules are based on competencies which are designed for infusion into ongoing special education programs. It is not intended that these modules replace curricula in methods, characteristics of handicapped children, etc. Rather, the curricula being developed will be capable of being infused into ongoing programs and into existing classes. This will enhance the probability of their use in existing programs without adding extra instructional burden to already overworked university and college faculty. The nine competencies on which these modules are based are listed below in Table 4.

Table 4

Competencies for a Core Curriculum for
Rural Special Educators

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the context of a rural school and its environment.

2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of differences involved in serving handicapped students in rural and in urban environments.

3. Students will demonstrate knowledge concerning the state-of-the-art of rural special education.

4. Students will demonstrate knowledge of effective service delivery models for rural handicapped children (including low-incidence handicaps such as severely emotionally disturbed, hearing impaired, and visually impaired).

5. Students will demonstrate an awareness of alternate resources to provide services to rural handicapped students and skills to identify alternate resources.

6. Students will demonstrate skills in working with parents of rural handicapped students.

7. Students will develop skills in working with citizens and agencies in rural communities to facilitate cooperation among schools and service agencies to serve handicapped students.

8. Students will demonstrate an understanding of personal development skills (a) for their own professional growth and (b) to build a local support system in their rural environment.

9. Students will develop skills in working with peer professionals from rural environments.

(Helge, 1983)

Some Bells and Whistles

The National Consortium of Universities Preparing Rural Special Educators will develop curriculum modules based on curriculum elements identified as important within the competencies listed above. Some examples of these curriculum elements are listed below under the competency within which they will be developed:

Table 5

Curriculum Elements to be Included in
Preservice Modules

I. The Rural Special Education Context

A. Differences in Rural and Urban Schools and Communities
B. Ruralness Defined
C. Inequities of Ruralness
D. Heterogeneity of Ruralness--Types of Rural Subcultures
E. Historical overview of rural education
F. Advantages and Disadvantages of Rural Schools
G. Community Services in Rural America
H. Effects of Federal Mandates for Rural Communities
I. Current Controversies
J. International Similarities in Problems and Strategies of Rural Service Delivery Systems
K. Misapplication of Urban Service Delivery Models
L. Associated Cost Problems
M. Personnel Needs and Roles
N. Affective Factors
O. Rural Minorities
P. Effective Processes of Creating Change in Rural Communities
Q. Rural Community Norms
R. Communication Systems in Rural Communities
S. Power Systems in Rural America
T. Fiscal Realities of Rural Schools/Departments/Class Budgets

II. Differences in Serving Rural Vs. Urban Handicapped Students

A. Percentages of School Population Served
B. Personnel Turnover
C. Transportation
D. Community Structure
E. Geography
F. Backlogs of Children for Testing and Placement
G. Communication
H. Student Body Composition
I. Education Professionals Approach
J. Population Density
K. Nonenrollment of School Age Children
L. Cooperation Among Agencies
M. Roles/Lack of Specialists

III. The State-of-the-Art of Rural Special Education

A. Problems Serving Rural Handicapped Children
B. Inherent Rural Attributes and Resources for Effective Service Delivery Systems

C. Perceptions of Parents of Handicapped Children About Rural Services Delivered
D. Changes in Rural Attitudinal Factors
E. Viewing Problems as Challenges and Rural Attributes as Positive Vehicles for Change.

IV. Effective Service Delivery Systems

A. Service Delivery Variables
B. District Variables
C. Community Variables
D. Importance of Generic Skills for Special Education Personnel
E. Alternate Instructional Arrangements and Delivery Systems
F. Generic Effective Strategies and Promising Practices for Individualizing Service Delivery Strategies for Specific Rural Subcultures
G. Building Personal and Professional Support Systems
H. Understanding Federal and State Mandates Regarding Special Rural Populations (e.g., migrant tracking system, health records, federal and state mandates and linkage systems)

V. Alternate Resources--Creative Ways to Identify Local Resources

A. Funding Alternatives
B. Rural Parents as Resources
C. Rural Communities as Resources
D. Facilitating Interagency Cooperation So Services will be Provided to Rural Handicapped Children
E. Advocacy Groups--National, Regional, State
F. Skills in Preparing Proposals for Principals and School Boards to Improve Services
G. Staff Development Resources--Cassette Tapes for Traveling, Satellite, Videotaping
H. Managing Non-Certified Aides Assigned to Assist in Special Education Classes

VI. Working With Parents of Rural Handicapped Students

A. Understanding Rural Parents
B. Establishing Rapport
C. Effective Parent-Professional Communication
D. Assessing Parent Needs and Planning Intervention Programs
E. Working with Extended Families
F. Designing Parent Education Systems
G. Serving as a Parent Advocate
H. Using Parent and Community Resources in the Schools

VII. Working with Rural Citizens and Agencies to Facilitate Cooperativeness Among Schools and Service Agencies

A. Establishing Rapport
B. Understanding Issues and Processes of Interagency Cooperation
C. Understanding Communication and Power Systems
D. Influencing Decision-Makers
E. Establishing Community Education Systems

VIII. Personal Coping Skills and Professional Development

A. Laboratory Problem Solving Skills--Improved and Decision Making
B. Effective Assertiveness for Handicapped Children
C. Self-Reliance vs. Referral to Specialists
D. Knowing the Limits of One's Own Knowledge
E. Being Able to Ask for Assistance from Supervisor/Department Chair/Neighboring District, etc.
F. Learning to Find Positives in What is Different and Challenges in Problems
G. Building Support Systems and Mentors in Atypical Places for Rural Special Needs Children (e.g., district psychologist, nurse, librarian, PTA officer, parents)
H. Prioritizing and Finding Agencies for Self and Professional Development to Prevent Burnout
I. Keeping Abreast New Developments
J. Influencing Decision Makers
K. Recognizing of Stress
L. Stress Management and Reduction
M. Alternate Leisure Activities/Self Entertainment for Isolated Areas
N. Developing Annotated Bibliographies of Resources (human, conceptual, technical, media, and materials)
O. Comfortableness with the Facilitator vs. Expert Role
P. Rural Leadership Skills
R. Maintaining Community Support
S. Accepting the Rural Community and Becoming Involved in its Affairs
T. Prioritizing one's energy for teaching vs. battles over community norms
U. Effecting Peaceful Progressive Relationships among Factors
V. Socially acceptable behavior in Rural Cultures/Personal Profiles to include Acceptance of Different Cultures, Norms and Values
W. Being an Effective Parent Advocate
X. Developing Abilities to Teach Independently and Maintain Classroom Discipline without Supervision

IX. Consulting with Regular Educators and Other Rural Peer Professionals

A. Understanding Communication Processes
B. Demonstrating a General Understanding of Procedures Involved in Consultation and Problem Solving

There are a multitude of resources available in rural areas for special educators to tap. Preservice and inservice programs designed to prepare rural special educators should provide instruction in how to take advantage of these resources. Some examples of rural resources accessible to educators include:

1. A positive "sense of community" and "we-ness". As a result, rural citizens are quick to come to the aid of their neighbors and can be mobilized to assist special educators in a variety of ways ranging from the contribution of individual skills to financial resources.

2. There are strong accountability networks in rural areas resulting from the basic fact that "everybody knows everybody". Therefore, things usually get done when promised, and negative situations are not allowed to get out of hand.

3. While there is some bureaucracy in rural areas, the informal political and communication systems are open to nearly everyone and provide special educators with vehicles for enhancing system-wide change.

4. Since most professionals in rural communities know each other and since they for the most part deal with the same constituency, rural special educators have easier access to a wide range of non-school services than do their urban cousins.

5. Rural communities have personalities, attitudes, and values. Once the special educator uses his or her knowledge for discovering these basic tenants of a given rural community, procedures for improving or changing special education delivery systems begin to become clear.

6. Since the majority of parents of handicapped children in rural areas will know each other, they can be mobilized. Through their own networks of friends and relatives, they can wield considerable weight in the best interest of the special education program.

These bells and whistles have been provided to encourage university and college faculty who prepare rural special educators to consider adopting a rural focus in their courses. Most of the material suggested here, while foreign to traditional teacher preparation programs, will provide rural special educators with unique knowledge needed to successfully survive in a rural school setting.

The Grand Finale

The thesis of this paper is that personnel specifically trained to work with rural handicapped populations will have greater personal as well as professional success. The 1980 SEP briefing paper stressed the importance of designing strategies to address critical personnel shortages in rural America. Such strategies must use existing facilities and resources, be consistent with certification guidelines for those to be trained, and include a substantial amount of training and integration with practicum experiences.

Curricula modules being field tested by the National Rural Project and the curricula which will be designed by the National Consortium of Universities Preparing Rural Special Educators observe the following guidelines:

1. Quality preservice models must provide for the training of competent special educators possessing appropriate skills to work with rural handicapped students.

2. Personnel must be trained to work with various categories of handicapping conditions including low-incidence handicaps. This training must include attention to the concepts and skills covered in the competencies and curriculum elements above as well as more traditional curricula.

3. Quality curriculum content should be data-based. Research concerning national and local cultural needs of rural areas should be incorporated into the design of training competencies and content. Content should include knowledge based on comprehensive literature reviews, recent site visits, and other contacts with local district and cooperative programs to determine effective and ineffective strategies of serving rural handicapped children.

4. Because of scarce professional resources in rural America, training programs should teach students to use existing resources. Cost analysis data should be incorporated into program design whenever possible.

5. Lasting change in rural areas cannot be accomplished unless change models are consistent with local community culture and value systems. Training curricula should teach students about local community systems and encourage understanding of models of service delivery which are consistent with local community values.

6. Training curricula must be designed with consideration for local community value systems. Students must be trained in alternative ways to adapt teaching techniques for specific rural community characteristics.

7. Rural special educators must work with a variety of handicapping conditions and play an assortment of roles in the community. Training should prepare special educators for a variety of leadership, service, and support roles.

8. Preservice curricula should stress flexible usage of instructional strategies. This will encourage more flexibility for faculty attempting to incorporate rural content into existing courses.

9. Training strategies must provide for procedures to follow-up classroom training in actual teaching environments. This should include practica, internships, and job placements. Field personnel should be involved in analysis of the skills of students trained by the curricula.

10. Training models should incorporate interdisciplinary training and be designed to prepare special educators to work with handicapped children in the 11,000 rural districts in America.

11. Innovations in technology should be used wherever feasible for enhancement of cost-effective personnel preparation. Also, the use of technology as a resource for special educators in rural areas should be taught as part of the preservice curriculum.

12. Research into topics and issues of concern in rural special education should be encouraged of university graduate students and faculty. Research findings should be disseminated to practitioners as well as preservice university faculty.

An Encore

The purpose of this paper is to provide university and college special education faculty with new grist for their mills. New curricula must be developed and used in the preparation of rural special educators. Traditional curricula sequences of characteristics of handicapped children, methods, curriculum development, practicum, and student teaching have not provided enough of what is really important for success in rural special education settings.

The competencies described and the modules being developed and field tested by the National Rural Project at Murray State University are logical first steps. The participation of university faculty and institutions in the National Consortium of Universities Preparing Rural Special Educators is another step.

Even though members of the band from across the land may differ in harmony, it is imperative that all players use music ("curricula") that is needed and desired by those who must dance to the tune of the band-wagon.

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